EVALUATION OF THE ALBERTA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Planning Services

Alberta
EDUCATION

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PLANNING SERVICES ALBERTA EDUCATION

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EDUCATION

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To the Reader,

Enclosed is a copy of the report on the evaluation of the Alberta School for the Deaf. Copies are being forwarded to parents of pupils enrolled, to the staff at the school and to others with responsibilities and interests in this area of special education.

Staff members in the various departments at the Alberta School for the Deaf have been active during recent months in considering the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the many reports which contributed to the evaluation. Planning for revisions to programs are under way. In early June the Advisory Board met for several days to consider the general report and the plans proposed by the staff.

The amount and quality of follow-up planning taking place is very gratifying.

Yours truly,

H. I. Hastings

H. I. Hastings
Director
Planning Services

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURES	1
RESULTS	3
MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	5
LOOKING AHEAD	15
CONCLUDING STATEMENT	20

BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURES

The Alberta School for the Deaf (ASD) is located in the City of Edmonton and is operated by the government of Alberta. In 1982-83 a staff of approximately 120, with an operating budget of $4.1 million (exclusive of maintenance and grounds) cared for 50 residential and 94 day students ranging in age from 5 to 18 years. A ten person Advisory Board advised the Superintendent, however, during 1982-83 while the evaluation was taking place, it appeared to become increasingly a policy making board. An organization called the Parents' Community Council raised funds and vigorously presented the viewpoints of some members.

An evaluation was requested by the Advisory Board, which was reacting to the concerns expressed by some parents and others. The last previous complete evaluation was in 1971. The terms of reference of the 1982-83 evaluation included these matters: the impact of ASD on students, both those currently enrolled and graduates; the instructional program; parent aspirations, activities, and involvement; administration of ASD (but not governance); and possible future directions.

The evaluation was formative that is, its purpose was to provide information and recommendations designed to improve ASD. In this, the evaluation was assisted by the Minister of Education meeting with the Advisory Board on September 23, 1982 and specifying a series of directives ASD was expected to follow. During the whole of the seven months of the evaluation (October 1982 through April 1983) the principal evaluators found ASD staff earnestly seeking to implement these directives. Evidence of changing procedures and programs was clearly discernible. By analogy, the evaluation was like shooting at a moving target.

The procedures used to gather data for the evaluation were diverse. Twelve Alberta Education consultants visited ASD and made observations in their speciality, particularly seeking to determine the extent to which the Alberta Program of Studies was being followed in the various subjects. Three external

specialists on deafness or education of the deaf spent a week observing and interviewing. Each of these fifteen persons provided immediate oral feedback to the appropriate members of ASD staff, and a written report to the principal evaluators. Some 79 interviews with parents, teachers, administrators, school board officials, government officials, university professors, members of the Advisory Board, and others were conducted by the principal evaluators. The interviews were non-directive, using only three major stimuli: what is your connection with ASD, tell me about ASD, and what improvements in ASD would you suggest. Input from the interview results, a steering committee appointed to provide assistance and direction to the evaluators, and the terms of reference of the evaluation, were used in the preparation of questionnaires for parents, teachers, houseparents and child care attendants, and graduates of ASD. The questionnaires had a number of agree-disagree type items, ranging from 25 to 33, and each had two open-ended or write-in-items; good things about ASD, and needed improvements. Respondents were not asked to provide their names, and in the case of parents, a telephone follow-up was used to increase the rate of return.

Because parent concerns had sparked the evaluation the report was written with parents in mind. A definition of deafness was provided.

> A deaf person is one whose hearing is disabled to an extent (usually 70 dB ISO or greater) that precludes the understanding of speech through the ear alone, with or without the use of a hearing aid.

The report noted that the hearing loss was that found over the speech range, and further that deafness included the severely deaf (70 to 90 decibels loss) and profoundly deaf (91 decibels or more). As of April, 1983, of the 144 students at ASD 120 were profoundly deaf. The principal evaluators were keenly aware that at least some of the disagreement and differences in view about deafness occurred because the above definitions were not in fact in the mind of the persons propounding the views. The report also noted that inherited deafness probably accounts for about half of all deafness, while various diseases (particularly rubella or German

measles) are other major causes. The incidence of deafness in Alberta as defined above was given as 75 per 100,000 which in 1982-83 would place the number of deaf children (age 5-18) at 317. The report also noted that one-third of the deaf (as defined above) have other handicapping conditions. The report also acknowledged that the crucial difficulty of the deaf was in communication and quoted Henry Minto, Director of Hearing Impaired and Speech Program Branch, Province of British Columbia, as follows.

> There is no substitute for hearing in the development of language and communication skills.

A comparison with hearing children with respect to vocabulary on entering school is provided: most deaf children have 50-200 words, where as most hearing children have 3000-5000.

The report also attempts to describe deaf culture, based, as are most sub-cultures, on language. The deaf feel comfortable with other deaf people, and many are not at all comfortable for any length of time with hearing people who do not sign. Thus they tend to congregate, as one observer remarked, like the Polish Canadians who go to their local Polish club.

The report tries, no doubt not adequately, to describe the intense feelings of parents when they discover their child is deaf. This is particularly distressing because 95 percent of these parents are themselves hearing, and most of them know little about deafness. Parents are quoted to illustrate some parental reactions and concerns, initially and after their child had been at ASD. The Parents' Community Council had an extended list of concerns about the quality of education offered by ASD.

RESULTS

Ninety out of a possible 133 parents (67.6 percent) returned questionnaires in time for use. Later, two more came in. The reliability and validity of the questionnaires were found to be satisfactory. There was very strong parental agreement that parents should learn to sign (88.9 percent), that there was a need for parent education (75.5 percent), that there should be

greater emphasis on language instruction (72.3 percent), and that students at ASD are generally happy (72.3 percent). On the overall evaluation item "ASD is a very good school" 24.5 percent of parents disagreed and 57.8 percent agreed. The open-ended or write-in portion of the questionnaires provided a rich source of illustration for the report. For example, here is a suggestion for improvement made by one parent.

> Teach the students the best possible system of use of English whether they are signing to their peers, talking, or writing a note to the boss.

The teacher questionnaire had a return of 34 out of a possible 37 (91.9 percent). In general, teachers were emphatic that administration needed strengthening. They strongly rejected the idea of additional parental input into the operation of ASD. They strongly endorsed the need for parent education. They perceived disjointedness in the curriculum. On the overall evaluation of ASD (a very good school) 82.3 percent agreed. It was found that deaf teachers and hearing teachers did not hold contrary views, but hearing teachers were more critical of ASD. It was also found that teachers in the Junior Department were less critical of ASD then were others. In summary, major teacher concerns were what they perceived to be a weak, non-supportive administration, and undue parental interference with the operation of the school.

Fourteen of 17 houseparents and five out of 5 child care attendants completed their questionnaires. Their major concern was a perceived lack of support from administration in the matter of student discipline. They favoured inservice education for themselves, and were concerned about isolation of students.

There were two sources of graduates: 20 were located locally, and 19 at Gallaudet College. It is not easy to summarize the results, except to say that in general graduates were critical of ASD. Of the two groups, those located locally were most critical. There were several items designed to elicit the "life view" of graduates. As the report noted "All have generally an optimistic and positive outlook on their lives".

Senior students at ASD were given a short questionnaire which was

administered with an interpreter signing. They liked ASD, thought it was a friendly place, felt Math. was their best subject and written English was most in need of improvement, felt they could communicate with their parents, and most claimed some help from their parents, particularly in the use of English. From responses to an open-ended item, a seven point writing scale was constructed. An example of the best was as follows.

> I can play and improve my abilities and enjoy myself with friends.

An example of the worst (seventh) was as follows.

> I interset of sport it was more fun. I was enjoy about Leadership expexirne about situation.

The report also provides the strengths and problems of ASD identified by Kelly Boesen, after he knew he was leaving the position of Superintendent.

MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The data supplied by consultants, external specialists, interviews, questionnaires, reports and reading provides the basis for the following major findings.

1. There are very diverse views on deaf education.
2. There are some aspects of deaf education about which there was universal, or almost universal, agreement: the use of total communication, the need for parent education, financial support for the school has been adequate.
3. The Alberta School for the Deaf is a good school. This was the overall evaluation. This finding is documented.
4. Fair and valid comparisons of school achievement in residential schools for the deaf could not be found.
5. The administration needs to be strengthened.
6. Continuing efforts must be made to improve standards of school achievement, particularly in language arts.
7. Isolation of students, or stated more positively, integration of students with the hearing world, is a matter of concern to many parents and others.
8. There is need for an agreed upon instructional program; for example, in signing, in curriculum, in curricular sequence, and the like.
9. The low pupil-teacher ratio is an excellent feature of ASD and is seen by staff as a way of providing more individualized instruction.

10. The residences provide an essential service, since nearly half of the students' homes are beyond the Greater Edmonton area.
11. The group home and off-campus living features of the residences provide a unique and very valuable service in familiarizing students with the hearing world, developing independence, and an introduction to independent living.

Taking many sources of data into account the principal evaluators reached a most important conclusion.

> It is a finding of this evaluation that if the Gallup poll type question were asked "Do you think that ASD is a good school?", the majority response of stakeholders would be "Yes". This is not to say that improvements are not needed. On the contrary, many are. ASD is a good school, and it can be better.

The report observes that the process of improvement was started by the Minister's directives, by the evaluation, and by the Alberta Education consultants' reports. The principal evaluators believe this process can and will continue, and will be stimulated by continuing feedback and evaluation.

Recommendation 1.

1. That it be the policy for ASD to embark on a continuous process of evaluation.
   1.1 That Alberta Education Consultants, who made recommendations for improvement in the 1982-1983 school year, be invited by the school to return to conduct inservice education for staff.
   1.2 That the date and nature of the next evaluation be established forthwith, and that it be made known to all staff.
   1.3 That the date be during the 1984-1985 school year.
   1.4 That the nature be the return of the same Alberta Education Consultants, insofar as is possible, to appraise progress toward implementing their 1982-1983 recommendations.
   1.5 That in the school year 1986-1987, a self-evaluation be made of progress toward improved communication, in the broadest sense, with parents.
   1.6 That there be a comprehensive evaluation in the school year 1988-1989.
   1.7 That the 1988-89 evaluation be a complete evaluation similar to the present one.
   1.8 That.....(further evaluations to be determined by ASD).

The report documents the need for communication and coordination. Parents were concerned about overlap and gaps in the curriculum. Teachers felt the lack of an agreed-upon curriculum. Students, too, were concerned. The report quotes a parent, who gave the following suggestion for improvement, in responding to the questionnaire.

> Follow a proper curriculum instead of whatever the teacher sees fit at the time.

The principal evaluators were convinced by the evidence of the need for a team approach.

Recommendation 2.

> 2. That each member of ASD staff accept the communication and coordination required for a team effort.
> 2.1 That the top administrator, and other administrators, accept consensus as the preferred mode for securing coordination, and recognize that if consensus cannot be reached after reasonable and effective communication, when decisions cannot be postponed, it is the responsibility of administration to make the best decision possible.
> 2.2 That staff accept the need for open communication and consensus about goals and procedures, and that each staff member recognize that if consensus is impossible because of his/her views, the first alternative is that administration decides, and the ultimate alternative that he/she resign.
> 2.3 That departments accept the need for communication and coordination and actively work to promote them.
> 2.4 That the residence staff and instructional staff accept the need for communication and coordination of effort and actively work to promote them.
> 2.5 That the instructional support staff and instructional staff accept the need for communication and coordination of effort and actively work to promote them.
> 2.6 That all other staff accept need for communication and coordination of effort and work to promote them.
> 2.7 That procedures be developed and regularly used to promote communication between and among individuals, departments, residence staff, instructional support staff, and others, as required.

A very deep concern of parents, frequently expressed, was the need for integration of deaf students into the hearing world. This

could range from mainstreaming (placing students in regular classes with hearing children) to increased emphasis at ASD on familiarization of students with the hearing world. Most experts believe that very, very few profoundly deaf students make good candidates for mainstreaming. The report deals at some length with the range of possibilities just described. The principal evaluators, after sifting the evidence available to them, believe that the best interests of students at ASD will be served by programs designed to familiarize the students with the hearing world, and to develop ability to live and work in it.

Recommendation 3.

3. That the purpose of ASD to prepare the deaf individual for a fulfilling role as an independent, productive member of society continue to be supported by activities and programs designed to familiarize the student with the hearing world, and to develop the skills and abilities to live and work in it.
   3.1 That the extracurricular program be strengthened and participation with hearing students be encouraged.
   3.2 That specifically the physical education and sports program as part of the extracurricular program be strengthened and participation with hearing students be encouraged.
   3.3 That various off-campus field trips, excursions, and the like be continually developed with a view to familiarization of students with the hearing world.
   3.4 That the model of the off-campus pre-vocational classes at W. P. Wagner be extended to other subjects.
   3.5 That efforts be made to integrate some classes in subjects such as Art and Physical Education.
   3.6 That the on-campus group living program be extended.
   3.7 That the off-campus living program be extended.
   3.8 That integration of hearing students, and hearing classes in ASD (reverse integration) be encouraged.
   3.9 That continued efforts be made to obtain summer employment and other work experience for students while they are at ASD.

Parents were very concerned about standards of achievement. The principal evaluators were not able to find fair and valid comparative standards of school achievement for severely and profoundly deaf students. ASD might take the lead in attempting to develop Canadian norms on some instrument such as the Hearing

Impaired version of the Stanford Achievement Test. Returning to concerns, the evaluators noted that both parents and teachers agreed that standards of school achievement should be higher, but it was also recognized expectations for students at ASD should be realistic.

Recommendation 4.

4. That the instructional staff (administrators, teachers, instructional support staff) at ASD accept as a goal the highest possible standard of school achievement for students.
   4.1 That the administration and staff of ASD study the desirability and feasibility of gradually extending the upper age limit from the present 18 to 21 years as the credit system, higher standards, and extended off-campus instruction become established and if found desirable and feasible the change be recommended to the government with a request that the Regulations be so changed.
   4.2 That ASD explore the possibilities inherent in both evening and summer classes for the deaf.
   4.3 That attention be paid by instructional staff to homework assignments, regular testing, the use of standardized tests, increased assignment of written work, and similar well-known ways to improve standards of achievement.

The need for parent education was generally accepted. After all, 95 percent of parents of deaf children are themselves hearing, and most have one and only one deaf child. There is a sudden and compelling need to have relevant information, and emotional support, which hopefully might produce acceptance.

Recommendation 5.

5. That ASD cooperate with parents in developing parent education.
   5.1 That a regular newsletter for parents be reintroduced. It might contain a few samples of student's work, information on a topic in a "Did you know?" section, news about activities at ASD, etc.
   5.2 That parents be polled on their opinions about general matters which affect them eg. Should ASD develop and use (or adopt or modify one available) a course in sex education? Should an optional course in correct use of ASL be offered? Would they be interested in the

development of a summer camp for hearing and deaf children? A telephone follow-up of the questionnaire would be an excellent opening for a conversation about deafness, their deaf child, etc.
5.3 That ASD support and assist in every way feasible any group of parents formed to further parent education.
5.4 That parent involvement in case conferences on assessment and individualized educational programs be encouraged by ASD.

Administration was a matter of deep concern to the staff of ASD. The principal evaluators had the report of the Alberta Education consultant, and input from interviews, questionnaires, and other sources. Governance was not part of the terms of reference of the evaluation, and the principal evaluators, looking ahead to possible future directions for ASD, were keenly aware that structure should be consistent with function. For the reasons cited, their recommendations about administration include referring those of the Alberta Education consultant to the appropriate persons, and their own recommendations were general rather than specific.

Recommendation 6.

6. That the administration of ASD be changed by allocating more responsibility to the present Advisory Board, and by changing the organizational structure to provide for firm, consistent, supportive administration.
6.1 That the Regulations of the Department of Education Act be changed to increase the powers and duties of the Board; that its name be changed by deleting "advisory"; that the position of Superintendent be eliminated; that the powers and duties formerly required of the Superintendent with appropriate amendments be allocated to a new position of Director, and that other changes consistent with section 7.8 and section 9 of this report be made.
6.2 That the responsibilities of the Director include being chief executive officer of the Board, advising the Board on policy, overall operation of the school, budget, and liaison with parents.
6.3 That there be Associate Directors who report to the Director.
6.4 That there be teacher seniors who act as Master Teachers.

6.5 That there continue to be a Bursar.
6.6 That the roles, duties, and responsibilities of each of the above positions be developed and recorded.
6.7 That the policy handbook of ASD be reviewed.
6.8 That particular attention be paid to policy on parental involvement, including: the open door policy of visitation be continued; any parent visiting the school is expected to first contact the Director; in-classroom visits require consent of the teacher and be limited to a reasonable number; parental complaints, if any, be a responsibility of the Director; appeal to the ASD Board normally be the end of appeal procedures, and the Minister encourage and support this policy on parent involvement.
6.9 That the documents prescribed in 6.6 and 6.7 above be submitted to the Board for approval.
6.10 That within the school they be available to all staff, and that outside of the school they be regarded as public, but not publicized, documents.

The residence provisions, especially the group homes, were the subject of general commendation. The need for inservice sessions for houseparents and child care attendants was noted in the report. However, the main thrust of the recommendations about the residence provisions was the articulation of this service with the education of the students.

Recommendation 7.

7. That the residential program be viewed as an integral part of the development of students: socially, personally, and educationally.
7.1 That continuing efforts be made to have the program foster integration (see recommendation 3 section 7.5), standards of school achievement particularly in language, parent education (see recommendation 5 section 7.7) and other aspects of the overall goals of ASD.
7.2 Evening study sessions should be more formal, with consideration being given to a mini-library or opening the library, a tutor to assist with homework, scheduled time for uninterrupted study, and similar provisions to strengthen these sessions.

7.3 Parental involvement can be increased by sending home specific suggestions for weekend (at home) study sessions. Such suggestions could serve to increase parental involvement and as a model for similar ones for day students. If adopted it is essential that the residence and day procedures be congruent.

The report has a detailed section devoted to the instructional program. For one school subject, language arts, the three external specialists and an Alberta Education consultant provided input. For other school subjects there was input only from the Alberta Education consultant. In the report, the description of how the subject was handled at ASD, commendations and recommendations are included. Because of the total length, and because the consultants' reports deal specifically with improvement of instruction, they are not summarized here.

Because of its importance, language arts was specially emphasized. The many comments and recommendations from the four sources mentioned above were the bases for the recommendation of the principal evaluators.

Recommendation 8.

8. That teachers in language arts at each level should meet regularly to coordinate programs, and that all language arts teachers should meet regularly to promote continuity of program from level to level. See the recommendations by Gee.
8.1 The language arts section of the Hearing Impaired Curriculum Guide should be accepted as a guide for the language arts curriculum at ASD.
8.2 The Alberta curriculum is of great value as a guide in teaching the language arts but cannot be followed in every detail in teaching all students at ASD.
8.3 ASD staff are to be commended for their use of manually coded English. However, there is great need to select and adopt the best possible type, train teachers and other staff in its use, and ensure consistent use by all teachers and other staff in contact with students.
8.4 While manually coded English is the language of instruction, in the corridors, at play, and on informal occasions it is appropriate to use ASL.

8.5 Teachers need adequate preparation, both preservice and inservice, for teaching language arts to deaf students.

8.6 Teachers should make greater use of the blackboard and overhead projectors.

8.7 If ASD provides a newsletter or newssheet for parents, the language arts staff should seek to have included examples of the best, average, and worst student contributions.

8.8 There should be increased emphasis on speech and hearing at ASD.

8.9 The classroom teacher must have the ultimate responsibility for teaching speech as an integral part of the language arts program.

8.10 ASD provides an excellent support service, which is regarded by teachers, especially those not in the Junior wing, with mixed feelings. It is clear that the communication and co-ordination called for in the second recommendation (see section 7.4) must extend to all instructional staff.

8.11 Every effort must be made to avoid speech therapy sessions intruding into students' regular lesson time. One system would involve increased use of speech therapy within the classroom designed at least in part to help the teacher to continue the exercises following the Ling Model. See Anderson's recommendations.

8.12 The sharing of expertise as between speech therapists and teachers should be accepted as part of staff inservice. Teachers and students should continue to use voicing as part of the total communication approach.

8.13 Every child should be given periodic language assessments, to be used in IEP's and ensuing language instruction, and to be followed by periodic testing and recording at regular intervals to monitor progress toward the goals established in the IEP's.

Support services are mentioned in the preceding recommendation. Other support services, including media/library, and guidance, were the subject of Alberta Education consultant reports which will not be summarized here.

The external specialists, parents, and teachers all expressed the need for very careful assessment and for periodic re-assessment of students. The principal evaluators made the following recommendations.

Recommendation 9.

9. That assessment and monitoring of student potential and progress be continued and strengthened.
9.1 That every effort be made to involve parents before the assessment or reassessment commences.
9.2 That several weeks during the summer break be used for some of the assessments and reassessments.
9.3 That a team of instructional support personnel and teachers be involved in the joint assessment and discussion, including in the early stages, parents if possible.
9.4 That every effort be made to discern parental wishes about speech and speech training, audition, signing and other matters related to communication (See section 6.6, problem area #3 identified by Boesen).
9.5 That a portable and usable record of the assessment, if possible easily reproducible, be made so that teachers and other instructional staff could have one for each student they instruct.
9.6 That a monitoring system be discussed, considered, and adopted for students at each level, including with the date of origin:
    9.6.1 samples of writing (English usage).
    9.6.2 samples of speech.
    9.6.3 results from teacher made tests in the basic subjects.
    9.6.4 standardized test results.
    9.6.5 other data deemed of use in monitoring student progress.
9.7 That the monitoring data be as available to teachers as the assessment data and be attached to it.
9.8 That the principal discuss with parents on a regular basis the progress of these children as shown.

The report mentioned that several sources had indicated that the A.U.P.E., as a union, was not closely tied to the teaching profession, that teacher salaries at ASD were lower than those of surrounding districts, and that membership in the appropriate specialist councils would be desirable.

Recommendation 10.

10. That the desirability, feasibility, and acceptability of the instructional staff becoming associated members of the ATA, with their own local, be considered by the teaching staff.

The matter of staff improvement was the subject of the next recommendation.

Recommendation 11.

> 11. That professional development of staff continue to be a high priority at ASD.
> 11.1 That staff preference among alternate programs be ascertained.
> 11.2 That expertise within the staff of ASD be used as much as possible in inservice education.
> 11.3 That the methods used in adult education be accepted as the model for inservice education.
> 11.4 That follow-up on the matters considered be planned and provided.

From many sides the message was received that American Sign Language is extensively used by the deaf. The principal evaluators made the following recommendation.

Recommendation 12.

> 12. That ASL be recognized as a major means of communication by the deaf, and that students at ASD be provided with an opportunity to improve and refine its use, by optional or extra-curricular courses offered by ASD.

LOOKING AHEAD

The report quotes Briggs' "A Comparative Survey of Physically Handicapped Children", and Kelly Boesen "The Next Twenty-five Years" at length, as bases for needs which were summarized as follows.

> The needs are: continued high quality education for the profoundly deaf; multi-disciplinary educational assessments; a practicum centre for the preparation of professionals especially teachers; a centre for research into deafness, deaf education and allied handicapping conditions; continuing education for deaf adults; and outreach in parent education in the broadest sense. All of this is related mainly to deafness. But the implication is that there are needs of other handicapped Albertans. The question then arises: is it most beneficial in a relatively small province of 2.4 million people to retain a specialized school, or could it safely be broadened to encompass other handicapping conditions for some of the needs outlined above?

The report then goes on to sketch four possible alternative futures for ASD.

1. A School for the Deaf

The evaluation found that ASD was a good school. The report elaborates this theme.

> The recommendations of this report, if they can be implemented, are designed to make the good better. The Alberta Education consultants have made sound recommendations and can provide excellent quality inservice education. Regular, planned evaluations will provide tangible short term goals. Communication among staff will enrich the knowledge of each member, and on important program components should lead to coordinated activity by consensus. Coordination must and will be obtained, as it is essential to the proper functioning of the school. Staff members who have become used to "doing their own thing" will find that giving up this freedom of action will not be easy. But the independence will be replaced by a group spirit of shared and accepted goals.
> Integration of students can be pursued by many means which have been recommended. Integration, in the sense of familiarization with the hearing world, and ability to live and work in the hearing world, is most desirable for all students, including the deaf. Standards of school achievement can and will be improved. This does not mean that every deaf child will become a Rhodes scholar. As with the hearing there will be "good, bad, and indifferent". Parent education and parent participation will greatly increase parent support of ASD. It will also help by informing, by providing opportunities for sharing, by seeking parental input, and by firmly indicating that direction of staff and of teaching methods is not a parental perogative. A firm, fair, consistent administration will provide the leadership the teaching staff so badly wanted. Residence provisions will continue to be recognized as facilitating social, personal, and educational development. In the words of Wick "Albertans have reason to be proud of ASD".

The report noted that ASD could and should move toward conducting research into deafness and deaf education, carrying on outreach in parent education, and providing help to other jurisdictions in the education of the deaf. It continues with a few remarks

on governance.

If the role of the school remains much as it is at present, the changes in governance could be to make the present advisory board a school board, to attempt to make the board the virtual end of the "appeal against decisions" procedures, to make the board a truly policy making body by persuading members not to attempt to intervene directly in the operations of the school, and to make the board more representative. Alternatively, the model of NAIT or the Community Colleges could be followed, where the control by government is restricted to budgetary control. The ASD board could then be an independent though appointed body, which employed its own staff, managed its own budget, and made its own policy. Staff would no longer be civil servants and could elect whatever representation they wished to accept. If this were to be the alternative, the representativeness of the board would have to be closely examined.

2. A Research and Demonstration Centre in the Faculty of Education, The University of Alberta.

Early in 1983 the University of Alberta put forward this proposal which is summarized in the report of the evaluation. The Research and Demonstration centre could be governed by an appointed Board on which the Dean of the Faculty of Education had positional representation, paralleling the administrative relationships between the University Hospital and The University of Alberta. Funding would come from the government. The Research and Demonstration centre would initiate a number of new thrusts listed as follows.

1. A growing research program into "sign language" and those aspects of the deaf culture which have practical applications to the development of a positive self image in deaf students.
2. The development of programs for training teachers of sign language.
3. The development of training programs for counsellors working with deaf students and adults - the proposed program for training "rehabilitation counsellors" at the University of Alberta is a first step along this route.
4. The development of an effective preparatory program for "high flying" academic students and a growing involvement of the Community College and University sector in the education of deaf students.

5. An upgrading of the entry level qualifications for teachers of the deaf.
6. The development of effective programs for training new and existing teachers in the teaching of speech to deaf students.
7. A growing program of "social work" for deaf adults and deaf students and their families.
8. A growing basic research program into auditory and perceptual processing in deaf and other sensory handicapped students.
9. A growing program of administrative and policy research in deaf education - ranging, at present, from basic demographic research to the quantitative aspects of the evaluation of the school for the deaf.

The original submission, paraphased to some extent above, had wide circulation and is readily obtainable. For these reasons further description is not provided.

3. An Alberta Centre for Education of the Deaf

This alternative is described in the evaluation report as follows.

> The third alternative future for ASD is much closer to the composite high school concept. The present ASD is like a special school such as a vocational or an academic high school. At this stage a new name should be sought, such as "Alberta Centre for Deafness Education". This title still indicates that education takes place, but shifts the focus to the idea that it is a centre of studies and practice in deafness education.
> However, this title is much more descriptive of the next 25 years as seen by Kelly Boesen:
> 1. A comprehensive educational centre.
> 2. A child study/assessment centre.
> 3. A Learning Resource Centre.
> 4. A Training/Demonstration Centre.
> 5. Community/Continuing Education Centre.
>
> The centre would stress educational assessment and monitoring, research into deafness education, practicum services for teacher education, and the provision of deaf education. It would extend the range of education of the deaf upward, to age 20 or 21, by extension of proven integration with nearby schools and colleges. If found desirable and feasible, it would in practice extend the range downward to age 3 as the lower limit. A number of the needs and new program features identified in the preceding alternative could be filled by this Centre.

The report suggests that governance could be a direct operation by Alberta Education, similar to the NAIT or Community College model. It would be possible for this centre to be related to The University of Alberta if the latter wished. Indeed, this proposal does not differ much from alternative 2.

4. A Centre for Exceptional Children

A description of this proposal is provided in the evaluation report as follows.

> This alternative is a truly composite or comprehensive thrust into the assessment, education and preparation of children who are exceptional. The first group, and one which would be guaranteed an assured place, would be the deaf who require the kind of services and facilities currently provided by ASD. The centre is thought of as a comprehensive centre, and assurance of continued and continuing provision for deafness could be provided by a system of earmarked budgets.
> It is proposed that the centre would, like an active treatment hospital, accept other exceptional children for educational assessment and monitoring, and for the planning and trying out of educational programs, for a maximum period of two years. Since additional buildings would be required, the extension of the centre beyond deafness would have to be phased in. A suggested order would start with the gifted, then those with learning disabilities, then the mentally retarded, and so on, phased over several years. In addition to the two year maximum, it is proposed that a numerical maximum of (say) 40-50 be specified for each of the gifted, learning disabled, mentally retarded, etc.
> The avowed purpose of such a centre would be twofold: to continue to offer quality education to the deaf, and to attempt to develop the best possible education for all exceptional children including the deaf. Assessment, educational programming, try-out, and monitoring would be at the heart of the operations of the centre.

The evaluation report presents a number of advantages of the proposal, and deals with a real difficulty.

> A question raised by such a proposal is why duplicate the excellent services of the Glenrose Hospital and the Alberta Childrens' Hospital? Undoubtedly some duplication might occur if the proposed centre dealt with the severely physically handicapped and with the emotionally disturbed. The principal evaluators do not have the breadth of knowledge to answer the question posed. However, the proposal is for <u>educational</u> assessment and programming, rather than

for medical. As described, the centre would focus on implications for education.

Finally, the matter of governance is briefly mentioned.

> Governance could follow one of three models. One is briefly outlined in alternative 2. If the University of Alberta, and the Faculty of Education were willing, they could administer the centre as a teaching/assessment/research/laboratory/practicum arm. The government could supply the funds for the provision of facilities, staff, and direct service provided by the centre, and could support the teaching/assessment/research/laboratory/practicum through the university budget. A representative Board for the centre would be responsible for operation, and the Dean of the Faculty of Education would have a positional placement on the Board. A second model could be that of NAIT or the Community College. A representative Board appointed by the government with its own budget, would operate the Centre. The third model is that the centre could be operated directly by the government as ASD is now, with a different and more representative Board. Implenenting the proposal would be comprehensive and costly. If adopted, the Centre could serve as a nucleus for cooperation and rationalization of the diverse and feisty parts or aspects of exceptionality.

Because a choice among the four futures sketched involves consideration far beyond an evaluation of ASD, they were put forward without recommendation.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The terms of reference determined the nature and scope of the evaluation. Because it was sparked by concerns of parents, the evaluation report was written with parents in mind. The principal evaluators are convinced that the procedures used in the evaluation were appropriate and adequate. The following quotation from the report delineates some of the needed improvements.

> The evaluation found several significant areas for improvement: the need for continuing evaluation; the need for communication and coordination; the need for continuing efforts to familiarize deaf students with the hearing world; the need for higher standards of student achievement; the need for parent education; the need for firm, fair, and consistent administration; and the need to continue to stress the educational, social, and personal development features of residence provisions.

The many commendations and recommendations of the section on instructional program should provide valuable guidance for the instructional staff. The descriptions of courses and programs may be of wider interest.

The process of change commenced by the Minister's directives of September 23, 1982, could clearly be seen in operation at the end of April, 1983. The principal evaluators are convinced that ASD is a good school, and, that it can and will be better.